

EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

***** MORNING HOT LIST *****

Report: Virginia must lead in fighting sea level rise

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN-PILOT Virginia needs to get serious about rising sea levels and frequent flooding and take the lead in combatting the problems that threaten the allure of living and doing business on the coast, according to a report distributed this week to state lawmakers. The report is hardly the first time that scientists have laid out the enormous stakes of sea level rise - especially in low-lying regions such as Hampton Roads and the Eastern Shore, which flood almost every time it rains. But the 135-page document is the first official statement on the politically charged problem as requested by the General Assembly and outlined by state scientific advisers at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. "It's a significant first step," said state Del. Lynwood Lewis, a Democrat who represents the Eastern Shore and a section of Norfolk. "It gets us moving. And, to me, the best news is that it shows we can do something about this." Lewis and others said the next logical step would be to study potential strategies for coping with rising waters and sinking lands, a one-two punch that makes Hampton Roads the second-most-vulnerable area to floods and storm surge in the nation behind New Orleans. The report says those strategies are proving effective in other parts of the world, such as Asia and Europe, though they often are expensive, controversial and time consuming. They include constructing sea walls and berms, passing zoning laws to discourage development in flood-prone areas, physically raising streets and infrastructure, and installing giant pumps and other stormwater-control devices. However, it does not appear that such a study will be approved this year by legislators. Politics and money are to blame, according to several legislators, aides and observers. While the study released this week cost only about \$50,000, it delves into the sticky world of climate change and global warming. State Sen. Ralph Northam, a Democrat who represents Norfolk and the Eastern Shore, and who was a co-patron of the study request last year, said he has no plans to introduce legislation on sea level rise this year.

We're in contact with uncontrolled chemicals

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER (Monday) In testimony before a Senate subcommittee, Ken Cook spoke passionately about 10 Americans who were found to have more than 200 synthetic chemicals in their blood. The list included flame retardants, lead, stain removers, and pesticides the federal government had banned three decades ago. "Their chemical exposures did not come from the air they breathed, the water they drank, or the food they ate," said Cook, president of the Environmental Working Group, a national advocacy group. How did he know? The 10 Americans were newborns. "Babies are coming into this world pre-polluted with toxic chemicals," he said. More than 80,000 chemicals are in use today, and most have not been independently tested for safety, regulatory officials say. Yet we come in contact with many every day - most notably, the bisphenol A in can linings and hard plastics, the flame retardants in couches, the nonstick coatings on cookware, the phthalates in personal care products, and the nonylphenols in detergents, shampoos, and paints. These five groups of chemicals were selected by Sonya Lunder, senior scientist with the Environmental Working Group, as ones that people should be aware of and try to avoid. They were among the first picked in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's recent effort to assess health risks for 83 of the most worrisome industrial chemicals. Lunder's basis was that they are chemicals Americans come in contact with daily. You don't have to live near a leaking Superfund site to be exposed. They are in many consumer products, albeit often unlabeled. Studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others have shown that they are

detectable in the blood or urine of many of us. Plus, much data exist showing their harm. "We have an incredible body of evidence for all these chemicals," she said. "In all cases, we have studies linking human exposure to human health effects."

Budget chief to agencies: Prepare for across-the-board spending cuts

WASHINGTON POST President Obama's acting budget director told agency heads Monday to step up their efforts to prepare for \$85 billion in automatic spending cuts on March 1 by planning for furloughs, contract delays, hiring freezes, buyouts and other cost reductions. The memorandum came on the same day the president warned Republicans in Congress against refusing to raise the country's borrowing limit, raising the stakes in a fiscal confrontation that, if not resolved in weeks, could result in drastic budget cuts known as a sequester. "Should Congress fail to act to avoid sequestration, there will be significant and harmful impact on a wide variety of government services and operations," acting Budget Director Jeffrey D. Zients wrote in a three-page memo to heads of executive branch departments and agencies. Zients cited the across-the-board cuts of 8 to 10 percent that would take effect at most domestic and civilian military agencies if Congress and the White House cannot reach a deficit-reduction deal: "Hundreds of thousands of families will lose critical education and wellness services through Head Start and nutrition assistance programs. The Department of Defense will face deep cuts that will reduce readiness of non-deployed units, delay needed investments... and cut services for military families. And federal agencies will likely need to furlough hundreds of thousands of employees and reduce essential services such as food inspections, air travel safety, prison security, border patrols and other mission-critical activities."

Editorial: Retreat on air: Closed-door talks weaken new county guidelines

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE Allegheny County's Board of Health last week amended new guidelines for controlling toxic air emissions that it just enacted in November, diluting them after closed-door meetings with County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. The last-minute alterations and how they came about are disappointing. The new toxic air guidelines replaced a scientifically outdated 1988 version that was all-but-unusable. The update was two years in the making, a collaboration by industry representatives, environmentalists and government officials, and the work was subject to public inspection and open hearings. Despite all of that preparation, the same board that voted 7-1 with one abstention in November to approve the guidelines just two months later, on Jan. 9, made a significant change on a 7-0 vote with two abstentions. The change moved what is called the "public exposure boundary," which is where the public health risk is measured. In the November version, the boundary was set at the property line of an industry that emits toxins into the air; in last week's version, the spot was moved to the nearest habitable structure. Critics say that will allow more hazardous pollutants to make their way to rivers, homes, parks and other public and private spaces. Almost as troubling as the outcome is the fact that Mr. Fitzgerald and the board, despite a long, public process, chose to work out 11th-hour changes away from scrutiny. Even in their weakened state, the guidelines represent a significant step forward in how the health department will evaluate applications for new permits from refineries, chemical manufacturers, power plants and other industrial facilities. It's just unfortunate that the county's big step forward had to be accompanied by any steps backward.

Environmental groups criticize proposed pollution limits on engines used in gas drilling

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE (Sunday) Emission controls in 'General Permit 5' would be too weak, opponents charge. Pennsylvania is considering new air pollution limits for diesel- and natural gas-powered engines used in Marcellus Shale development that are stricter than those that exist now but, according to eight environmental groups, not nearly as tough as they could and should be. The new pollution limits are contained in a

proposed "General Permit 5," now under final consideration by the state Department of Environmental Protection, and would significantly reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides or "NOx" -- a primary component of unhealthy ozone, smog and acid rain. They also would apply to other pollutants from well drilling, compressor station and pipeline pumping engines of less than 1,500 horsepower that emit less than 100 tons of the pollutant annually. But after two years of lobbying by the gas drilling industry, the DEP decided to allow the engines to emit three times more air pollution than what was initially proposed by the DEP's Bureau of Air Quality in 2010, even though emissions-controls manufacturers say their equipment can meet lower emissions limits. The higher pollution limits allowed in the proposed general permit could cause significant air quality deterioration in coming years as Marcellus Shale wells, pipelines and compressor stations multiply, according to a 55-page comment document by the Clean Air Council, a Philadelphia-based environmental organization, and seven other environmental and community groups. "We'd like to see policy based on relevant science. That's what should be at the heart of this thing," said David Presley, a Clean Air Council attorney. He said the DEP increased the emissions limits in the general permit proposal based solely on drilling industry objections and didn't verify the accuracy of claims that the technology isn't applicable. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also was critical of general permit control requirements for larger engines known as "synthetic minor sources" -- those that would have emissions of more than 100 tons of NOx a year if not for the use of controls. And the agency urged the DEP to consider the cumulative impact that issuing numerous general permits could have on air quality standards.

Nation already feeling backlash of unchecked climate change

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL (Saturday) A new national report flatly declared Friday that global climate change "is already affecting the American people" -- making seasons hotter and drier, whipping up more furious storms and floods and threatening global ecosystems and every aspect of human activity. "Evidence for climate change abounds, from the top of the atmosphere to the depths of the oceans," said the draft National Climate Assessment, which is issued every four years. In an opening to the 1,146-page document, described as "A letter to the American People," the report's lead officials said: "Climate change, once considered an issue for a distant future, has moved firmly into the present," with evidence to be found in hotter seasons, increased wildfires, and retreating sea ice. "Americans are noticing changes all around them," the report said. "Summers are longer and hotter, and periods of extreme heat last longer than any living American has ever experienced. Winters are generally shorter and warmer. Rain comes in heavier downpours, though in many regions there are longer dry spells in between." Some areas initially could benefit from warmer temperatures or climate alterations, they conceded. "But many more have already proven to be detrimental, largely because society and its infrastructure were designed for the climate of the past, not for the rapidly changing climate of the present or the future." Without large reductions in global emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gas -- mainly pollutants from burning fossil fuel -- effects will steadily worsen, with sea levels rising for centuries, heat waves and extreme weather worsening, the report said. Burdens could fall most heavily on those least able to manage, including "the elderly, children, the poor and the sick," the report said. Those living along coastal areas will be subject to rising tides and storm surges. People living in already hot and dry regions will see their homes become hotter and drier. Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary Collin P. O'Mara said that the study found severe consequences for the Northeast in particular, if worldwide greenhouse gas emissions remain at high levels.

Federal agency launches investigation of possible drinking water contamination around Radford arsenal

ROANOKE TIMES A federal public health agency is investigating possible contamination of drinking water that flows from the Radford arsenal, which sits atop buried hazardous waste. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry will hold an open house Jan. 24 at Belview Elementary School to hear from concerned community members. The agency's mission, it said this week, is "to evaluate whether the community near the Radford Army Ammunition Plant was exposed to harmful chemicals." For years, some residents have worried that traces of hazardous waste -- the leftovers of making ammunition that were dumped on the plant's sprawling grounds decades ago, before current environmental regulations took effect -- may have found their way into the wells of nearby homes.

Tests by the Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Environmental Quality have found little evidence to support those concerns. But at the request of a local environmental organization, the Agency for Toxic Substances agreed to embark on what may be a more detailed examination.

"If there are big red flags, hopefully they will be the ones that will do something," said Maria Bowling of the New River Sierra Club, one of the groups that pushed for the investigation. "That's their job, and they know how to deal with data." The Agency for Toxic Substances, an arm of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said it will be at least a year before it completes its evaluation.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

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The EPA's most worrisome toxins (sidebar) Bisphenol A (BPA) Uses: It hardens clear "polycarbonate" plastics, which are used in compact discs, plastic dinnerware, eyeglass lenses, toys, beverage bottles, and impact-resistant safety equipment. Also used in the linings of food cans, in dental sealants, and on cash register receipts.

Health concerns: BPA is considered estrogenic and has been shown to affect the reproductive systems of laboratory animals. BPA also has been linked to many other disorders. Potential harm is considered highest for young children, because their bodies have immature systems for detoxifying chemicals...

Cleaner Steam Heat The Center City steam loop, source of the Dickensian sidewalk vapor clouds that have warmed the soles of generations of pedestrians, does not normally evoke images of a modern energy system. But in the last two years, the system's owner, Veolia Energy, has quietly upgraded its century-old power plant in Grays Ferry to reposition the nation's third-largest district heating system as an environmentally friendly energy source. Veolia is calling it "green steam." On Monday, Mayor Nutter and Robert F. Powelson, chairman of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC), will inaugurate Veolia's \$60 million upgrade, which the Mayor's Office praises for reducing the city's greenhouse gas emissions. By installing new natural gas boilers and expanding the pipeline that delivers gas to the plant, Veolia will virtually eliminate the plant's use of high-sulfur fuel oil to produce steam for the system's 300 customers, including some of the city's most prominent buildings. Natural gas costs less than fuel oil, so the bills for Veolia's customers should decrease. And natural gas burns more cleanly than oil, so the plant will emit 93 percent less sulfur dioxide, 20 percent less nitrogen oxide, and 70,000 fewer metric tons of greenhouse gases a year. Veolia is marketing the improvements to property owners who face increasing pressure to be more environmentally conscious. Under a new city law, large commercial buildings must report their energy consumption to government, which will "benchmark" properties for efficiency. Veolia customers will be able to take credit for a share of the efficiency

improvements. "It really helps the customers achieve their goals of efficiency and emissions reductions," said Michael J. Smedley, Veolia's Mid-Atlantic vice president.

PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

Money, politics and pollution in fracking country IT WAS JAN. 18, 2011 - just a day before Gov. Corbett took the oath of office - when, without warning, trucks started rolling one after another into a once-abandoned industrial site in the Susquehanna River town of Sunbury, Pa. At the end of that day, stunned and angry neighbors counted 27 large dump trucks on their small residential street, filled with the debris from gas-drilling rigs in the Marcellus Shale. Some of the trucks were leaking liquids, said the neighbors, including Cora Campbell, who recalled that "it smelled like a combination of diesel fuel and dirt." For months, Campbell and others in the history-rich town of 10,000, an hour north of Harrisburg, and environmental activists pressed the new owner of the site, the logistics firm Moran Industries, and regulators from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), to find out what was happening at the property and how it could handle so much fracking waste without environmental permits. But there was something else that Sunbury residents didn't find out until long after DEP sided with Moran Industries: Its subsidiary's contract with an interstate railroad, signed three months after the waste-transfer station opened, now meant that it was exempt from Pennsylvania permitting laws. It turned out that the company's owner, John Moran Jr., wasn't just a major political donor who'd given more than \$100,000 to Corbett's gubernatorial campaign, but he also had gifted more than \$2,400 for Corbett's personal travel, including hosting the governor and his wife on a yacht off Rhode Island in July 2011. The trips weren't revealed until last fall, in an amendment to an earlier Corbett ethics-disclosure form.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Editorial: Retreat on air: Closed-door talks weaken new county guidelines Allegheny County's Board of Health last week amended new guidelines for controlling toxic air emissions that it just enacted in November, diluting them after closed-door meetings with County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. The last-minute alterations and how they came about are disappointing. The new toxic air guidelines replaced a scientifically outdated 1988 version that was all-but-unusable. The update was two years in the making, a collaboration by industry representatives, environmentalists and government officials, and the work was subject to public inspection and open hearings. Despite all of that preparation, the same board that voted 7-1 with one abstention in November to approve the guidelines just two months later, on Jan. 9, made a significant change on a 7-0 vote with two abstentions. The change moved what is called the "public exposure boundary," which is where the public health risk is measured. In the November version, the boundary was set at the property line of an industry that emits toxins into the air; in last week's version, the spot was moved to the nearest habitable structure. Critics say that will allow more hazardous pollutants to make their way to rivers, homes, parks and other public and private spaces. Almost as troubling as the outcome is the fact that Mr. Fitzgerald and the board, despite a long, public process, chose to work out 11th-hour changes away from scrutiny. Even in their weakened state, the guidelines represent a significant step forward in how the health department will evaluate applications for new permits from refineries, chemical manufacturers, power plants and other industrial facilities. It's just unfortunate that the county's big step forward had to be accompanied by any steps backward.

Environmental groups criticize proposed pollution limits on engines used in gas drilling Emission controls in 'General Permit 5' would be too weak, opponents charge. Pennsylvania is considering new air pollution limits for diesel- and natural gas-powered engines used in Marcellus Shale development that are stricter than those that exist now but, according to eight environmental groups, not nearly as tough as they could and should be. The new pollution limits are contained in a proposed "General Permit 5," now under final consideration by the state Department of Environmental Protection, and would significantly reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides or "NOx" -- a primary component of unhealthy ozone, smog and acid rain. They also would apply to other pollutants from well drilling, compressor station and pipeline pumping engines of less than 1,500 horsepower that emit less than 100 tons of the pollutant annually. But after two years of lobbying by the gas drilling industry, the DEP decided to allow the engines to emit three times more air pollution than what was initially proposed by the DEP's Bureau of Air Quality in 2010, even though emissions-controls manufacturers say their equipment can meet lower emissions limits. The higher pollution limits allowed in the proposed general permit could cause significant air quality deterioration in coming years as Marcellus Shale wells, pipelines and compressor stations multiply, according to a 55-page comment document by the Clean Air Council, a Philadelphia-based environmental organization, and seven other environmental and community groups. "We'd like to see policy based on relevant science. That's what should be at the heart of this thing," said David Presley, a Clean Air

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Commentary: River of the Year? C'mon, man, it's got to be the Mon The Morning File hasn't been this excited about a voting competition since the time we and friends conducted a late-night poll in a bar about which Pittsburgh celebrity seemed least like a Pittsburgher. (Andy Warhol won over Dennis Miller.) We're talking now, of course, about the online voting for Pennsylvania's 2013 River of the Year. This is a historic Western Pennsylvania moment because the Monongahela River has the chance to be designated, for the first time ever, as the state River of the Year. Never in its many thousands of years of existence has the Mon been so close to such a noble distinction. (It might have once been voted Best River to Spit in From a Bridge, but that's about it.) The annual River of the Year designation dates only to 1983 rather than the Ice Age, but still, you'd think the mighty Mon would have been picked sometime during the past three decades. Sure, it's had its down years, littered with pollution, but it's not like it's the flaming Cuyahoga or anything. For many years, the River of the Year was chosen by state officials with no democratic vote. It was as though our waterways were all running through North Korea. That changed in 2011, when it was first put to an online ballot, and the Clarion River emerged the winner. Last year, the Mon finished second to the Stonycreek River near Johnstown (another underdog, to be sure). This year, it's a six-river race in voting at www.pawatersheds.org/vote. Here's where the vote tallies stood at the end of last week, with balloting permitted through this coming Friday:

Vacant lots on the North Side in Pittsburgh turning into gardens Rows of blueberry plants fill a city-owned Perry South lot that was once the weedy end zone of many a police chase on Pittsburgh's Charles Street. It is now part of a city lease agreement with the Pittsburgh Project, and the bushes will bear fruit for the neighborhood. Half a mile away, also in Perry South, sunflowers have replaced weeds and demolition rubble on Burgess Street. And in Manchester, elders enjoyed the summer harvest from a community garden. Since last year, when the Buhl Foundation and Alcoa infused \$125,000 into a project of GTECH Strategies, one North Side patch after another is yielding benefits. The stimulus continues this year with a sole focus on vacant land reclamation. The Reclaim project is a pilot effort on the North Side, but its managers hope to replicate it. "We are using this model and will try to take it to different neighborhoods," said Megan Zeigler, senior manager of Reclaim. "We can tweak it to the needs of any community, but it will always have some connection to vacant land because that's what we do." Through the end of this month, GTECH -- which stands for Growth Through Energy + Community Health -- is seeking another round of ideas for North Side lots and will select 10. It is taking applications at www.gtechstrategies.org. GTECH will supply stipends, a production fund and technical assistance through the year, a total of about \$2,500 per project. Selected winners will be trained in the processes associated with the reuse of vacant lots, of which the North Side has about 5,200 parcels that once held buildings. Last year, GTECH chose 13 projects to jump-start. They included a mushroom-growing enterprise that A.J. Tarnas of Spring Garden may expand this year into a garden that Mark Williams oversees as a volunteer at the Pittsburgh Project. The two men connected in GTECH's training; Mr. Williams established the blueberry lot on Charles Street.

Editorial: Too hot to handle: The danger of climate change is cause to sweat (Sunday) Mother Nature is trying to tell us something and every passing year her message becomes more urgent. That is the takeaway from the news that 2012 was the hottest year in the history of the contiguous United States. The politicized community of climate change deniers will always find a way to deny the obvious, but more and more the obvious just won't be pushed out of sight. The situation has become a grim variation of the punch line to the old joke: Who are you going to believe, the climate change deniers or the evidence of your own eyes -- or, in this case, the temperature of your own skin? Plainly, something is seriously wrong with the weather and the climate systems that form it. You don't have to be a scientist to recognize this. In Pittsburgh, you just have to remember the winters of yore when ponds were frozen and winter sat heavily on the landscape for weeks. As it happens, the world's scientists are overwhelmingly united in the belief that the planet's climate is changing and mankind's release of carbon-based pollution has had a hand in it. The fallback position of the skeptics is that the facts can be explained in terms of natural rhythms that have always occurred. That is progress, the place where a sensible debate might begin... According to The Associated Press, Australia had its hottest day on record Monday with a nationwide average of 104.59 degrees Fahrenheit. On Tuesday, Sydney, a port city often cooled by breezes off the ocean, registered a temperature of 109 degrees. It's another subject that President Barack Obama and

Congress must address, despite the fact that U.S. politicians have been like the frog in the heated pot that slowly boiled to death without uttering a croak of sense.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Smart Growth offers resources to Westmoreland communities Officials with Smart Growth Partnership held an informal community partners meeting in Mt. Pleasant last week, talking about the program and its vision and benefits to representatives of six local municipalities. Representatives from Mt. Pleasant, Scottdale, Greensburg, Youngwood, Ligonier and Latrobe attended. The mission of the Smart Growth Partnership, which is now a program of Penn State Cooperative Extension, is to help enable communities to enhance their quality of life, viability and long-term sustainability by providing information, education and assistance. "We are now going in a different direction," said Allen Kukovich, Smart Growth Partnership board president. "We are more focused and more targeted, offering our resources to help local communities." Kukovich, a former state senator, said the group now hopes to reach out more to communities in an effort to accentuate and improve networking, using information garnered as a tool to help neighboring towns. "Working with local governments is the single most important thing that we want to do," Kukovich said. "We want to be a resource and have you share the direction that Smart Growth is taking." A new concept the group is working with is enlisting college students from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, to work on organized study and research projects that will have a direct impact on proposed projects from towns.

Engineer: Progress made on West Newton sewage project Progress has been made on sewage system upgrades in West Newton, an engineer told borough council on Monday. About 62 percent of the \$2.5 million project is complete, according to borough engineer Timothy Brett. Once gates are installed to regulate the overflow of water from the Youghiogheny River into the borough's system, the improvements will be checked with a monitor and sensors to ensure that the system is working properly. The system's calibration will be checked every few, Brett said. When the monitoring shows that the river is not flooding the sewage lines, the borough can report to the state Department of Environmental Protection that it is in compliance with the long-term flood control plan, he said. There is no set range of months that the system must be monitored after the project is completed, Brett said. "It's really a function of whether or not the river comes up, you could get lucky in the fall or the summer," he said.

CLEARFIELD PROGRESS

City of DuBois considers its natural gas options DUBOIS - The City of DuBois does not have the ability to participate in a program to convert its municipal fleet to compressed natural gas, but purchasing natural gas trucks in the future could be viable. Redevelopment Authority Director Joe Mitchell at yesterday's city council work session said he reviewed a program to convert the city's municipal fleet to compressed natural gas. However, the program didn't apply to the city's smaller vehicles. It would have required the city's vehicles to be 15,000 gbw or more and most of the city's vehicles are less than that, he said. It also would've required a commitment of nine vehicles. "We were approached with a grant from a local fueling station that's working at putting in a compressed natural gas facility," said Mitchell. "They hope to have that in the third quarter of this year. It's a viable option for us in the future, if that would go in." Mitchell said the fueling station provided an estimation of what the city fleet approximately runs on a truck. The payment for ordering a natural gas truck, because it's an additional cost over a diesel one, would be about 4-5 years, he said.

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

Contaminated dirt pile near Bristol school might be cleaned up sooner than later A contaminated dirt pile that's been an eyesore in Bristol might be removed sooner than expected. "We are hopefully making progress with ... the removal of the pile," school board President Ralph DiGuseppe III said at last week's Bristol Borough school board meeting. "We may be closer than not of removing this unsightly eyesore." The dirt mountain has been sitting on Buckley Street toward Beaver Street at the site of the Snyder-Girotti Elementary School since at least 2007, officials have said. Any cleanup efforts would have to follow Department of Environmental Protection guidelines. The district's engineer has informed officials that "there could potentially be some money and some effort made by the DEP to help us out in the removal of the pile. We have a phone call in to them and, hopefully, we can set up a meeting where they might let us actually deal with the pile individually and then deal with the site as a whole down the road. Up to this point, they have told us that the site needs to be treated as a whole." Other agencies and individuals might be willing to help the district, he said, adding that Sen. Tommy Tomlinson, R-6, has been helpful. In 2011, a study by the Gilmore and Associates

engineering team, hired by the district, concluded that benzo(a)pyrene, lead and arsenic are in the dirt pile. Cleaning it up could cost the financially strapped district hundreds of thousands of dollars. It's been a community concern since 2007, when contractors put the dirt there under the direction of former school board members during construction of the school. The pile of dirt towers over a fence that surrounds it. District officials have been active in keeping the public, including children, away from the pile.

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

If it meets DEP air quality outline, power plant is welcome (Sunday) It's an episode that's been repeated hundreds of times over the years. A power plant bringing jobs and economic development is proposed for Clinton Township on Saeger Station Road. And lots of people don't want it in their neighborhood, for environmental and quality of life reasons. The pros and cons toward the plans of Moxie Energy were clearly outlined at a state Department of Environmental Protection hearing nine days ago. Some residents are weary from health, environmental and industrial effects of other companies along the Route 405 corridor between Muncy and Montgomery. That's their story and they are sticking to it. But others have another take. They are happy at the prospects of an 800-megawatt combined cycle power plant fueled by natural gas. The availability of local natural gas deposits made it feasible for the company to locate in Clinton Township. From where we sit, the environmental issue is in DEP's lap. Moxie obviously is going to have to satisfy DEP's environmental marching orders or it won't be able to establish its plant. The health concerns would seem to be rather hard to quantify. Many of those concerns exist for a variety of industrial developments in many places. The neighborhood concerns are very understandable. Most people would prefer housing and open spaces near the place they call home. But if Moxie's plans meet the zoning and codes requirements where the plant is located, or if they are given exceptions and meet them, it's hard for us to rationalize turning down the development. If this nation is going to become energy independent which would have a large, positive economic and foreign relations impact we need to have open minds to alternatives from what we are all used to. That means wind turbines and natural gas power plants and nuclear generation and a host of other energy development and related businesses are going to be a big part of our future. Those developments, the jobs and economy they bring, and the security for our country that they further are a pretty sound trade off for the tweaks in our lifestyles that they bring. That comes with the caveat that the plans be given environmental validation.

STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA

Shedding light on both sides of the shale story A photographic exhibit of Marcellus Shale drilling is making at stop at the Gershman Y in Center City Philadelphia. Six accomplished and award-winning photo journalists have spent several years traveling across the state to document the shale gas boom. Cows grazing beside a pipeline, picturesque farmhouse landscapes framed by drill rigs lighting up the night sky, and the portrait of a pig-tailed toddler wearing a patriotic T-shirt are just a few of the pieces on display. Each photographer aims his or her lens at the natural gas rush in a unique way. But the project's leader, Brian Cohen, says they all wanted to shoot the highly polarized subject objectively. "There's a lot of heat generated by this subject but not a lot of light. And I wanted this project to shed some light. It's a very complex story," he said. "It's very nuanced. It's not black or white." The exhibit includes shots of residents who have benefited from gas drilling as well as those who have suffered. "Anybody who tells you that natural gas drilling is all good, all the time, is not telling you the whole story," he says. "And anybody who tells you it's all bad all the time is not telling you the whole story either." Cohen says those on opposite sides of the natural gas drilling debate could interpret the same photograph in two different ways. One perspective, however, is missing from the show — intimate shots of the gas industry. Despite repeated attempts, Cohen says, gas drillers would not participate in the project. The show will continue through mid-February.

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL

Matt Damon movie 'Promised Land' becomes latest battlefield in gas drilling debate They've faced off in court, on op-ed pages and town-hall meetings across Pennsylvania. Now the anti-gas-drilling and the pro-gas-drilling groups have a new battlefield — Hollywood. The new movie "Promised Land," starring Matt Damon as an arrogant yet amiable gas-drilling pitchman, has led both camps to mobilize campaigns at movie theaters in Pennsylvania, where the film takes place. At stake are the hearts and minds of movie-goers like Jacque Poplawski, of Bethlehem, and her best friend, Jane Pheiffer, of Palmer Township. The two caught a matinee at Carmike Cinemas in Hanover Township, Lehigh County

earlier this week. They admitted they came because of the film's handsome star, but left with questions about gas drilling and the controversial technique, hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, mentioned in the movie. "Well, I like Matt Damon," Poplawski said. "It really made me think about fracking and whether it's a good thing." _

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

Effects of climate change will be felt more deeply in decades ahead, draft report says (Jan. 11) (A federal advisory panel released a draft report Friday on how Americans can adapt to a changing climate, a more than 1,000 page tome that also sums up what has become increasingly apparent: The country is hotter than it used to be, rainfall is becoming both more intense and more erratic, and rising seas and storm surges threaten U.S. coasts. The draft of the third National Climate Assessment warns that with the current rate of global carbon emissions, these impacts will intensify in the coming decades. The report does not include policy recommendations, but it is designed to guide decision-makers on the federal, state and local level on how to prepare for a warmer world. In a joint blog post Friday, White House science adviser John P. Holdren and Jane Lubchenco, head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, wrote that it is aimed at Americans "who need information about climate change in order to thrive — from farmers deciding which crops to grow, to city planners deciding the diameter of new storm sewers they are replacing, to electric utilities and regulators pondering how to protect the power grid."

Budget chief to agencies: Prepare for across-the-board spending cuts President Obama's acting budget director told agency heads Monday to step up their efforts to prepare for \$85 billion in automatic spending cuts on March 1 by planning for furloughs, contract delays, hiring freezes, buyouts and other cost reductions. The memorandum came on the same day the president warned Republicans in Congress against refusing to raise the country's borrowing limit, raising the stakes in a fiscal confrontation that, if not resolved in weeks, could result in drastic budget cuts known as a sequester. "Should Congress fail to act to avoid sequestration, there will be significant and harmful impact on a wide variety of government services and operations," acting Budget Director Jeffrey D. Zients wrote in a three-page memo to heads of executive branch departments and agencies. Zients cited the across-the-board cuts of 8 to 10 percent that would take effect at most domestic and civilian military agencies if Congress and the White House cannot reach a deficit-reduction deal: "Hundreds of thousands of families will lose critical education and wellness services through Head Start and nutrition assistance programs. The Department of Defense will face deep cuts that will reduce readiness of non-deployed units, delay needed investments... and cut services for military families. And federal agencies will likely need to furlough hundreds of thousands of employees and reduce essential services such as food inspections, air travel safety, prison security, border patrols and other mission-critical activities."

Fiscal issues put federal workers in crosshairs — again Uncle Sam's precarious financial situation means one crisis after another for his staff. The latest indication of this came from President Obama, the boss in chief, at a news conference Monday. If Congress doesn't raise the nation's debt ceiling, which limits the amount Sam can borrow to pay his bills, Obama made it clear that federal employees will be among those who suffer. "If congressional Republicans refuse to pay America's bills on time, Social Security checks and veterans' benefits will be delayed," Obama said. "We might not be able to pay our troops, or honor our contracts with small-business owners. Food inspectors, air traffic controllers, specialists who track down loose nuclear material wouldn't get their paychecks." The debt ceiling is separate from another looming crisis, potential across-the-board budget cuts. Take a look at what's percolating at the Defense Department. It's the largest government agency, and what it does can be an indication of what's in store for employees across the government. That's one reason Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta's "strictly precautionary" plan to deal with possible budget cuts is noteworthy. "This includes a plan to implement potential unpaid furloughs for our civilian personnel if sequestration is triggered," he said at a news briefing last week. Sequestration is the across-the-board budget reduction that would hit federal agencies by March 1 unless Congress acts.

Federal union blasts Pentagon budget plan (Jan. 11) The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) says the Pentagon's budget plan shows "unapologetic bias in favor of contractors, regardless of cost." The plan "is strictly

precautionary," Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said at a news briefing Thursday. "This includes a plan to implement potential unpaid furloughs for our civilian personnel if sequestration is triggered," he said.

WASHINGTON EXAMINER

Glitches mar EPA release of first batch of 'Windsorgate' emails Officials with the Environmental Protection Agency posted a file late today containing approximately 2,100 of a promised first tranche of 3,000 "Windsorgate" emails sent by and to the agency's administrator, Lisa Jackson. Jackson admitted last month to using the non de plume "Richard Windsor" on a government email account. She said the name came from her dog and that she only used the account for internal messaging within EPA. It is against federal law for government officials to use email accounts bearing fake names to conduct official business. Technical glitches marred the release, however, as a link on the EPA web site to the emails initially would not work. Later in the afternoon, it would only open to a cover letter explaining that only 2,100 emails were being released today instead of the promised 3,000. The agency must make public all 12,000 of the controversial emails and had agreed to do so in four tranches, with today being the first release. Andre Belknap, an EPA assistant press secretary, told *The Washington Examiner*, her agency was experiencing "technical difficulties with the link." Late this afternoon, the link began to function properly and can now be viewed [here](#). Readers must scroll down quite a ways to the 12th entry on the page. Meanwhile, a few discs of the emails were obtained by parties to the litigation that resulted in the court order for the documents' release, but apparently there is no order such as a date sequence or size metric by which the materials were organized.

Op-Ed: The EPA washes out in Virginia (Monday) Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, R, won a significant victory against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Jan. 3. A federal district court in Virginia ruled in favor of the state in a dispute over stormwater runoff in the case Virginia Department of Transportation v. EPA. As Cuccinelli said, the "EPA was literally treating water itself -- the very substance the Clean Water Act was created to protect -- as a pollutant." In a prime example of the unlawful and economically destructive positions taken by the EPA under outgoing administrator Lisa Jackson, the agency claimed that it could regulate the stormwater running into Accotink Creek, a 25-mile-long tributary of the Potomac River. Although the EPA was forced to admit that stormwater is not a pollutant, it still claimed the authority to regulate it, claiming it was a "surrogate" for sediment, which is a regulated pollutant. Under the Clean Water Act, the EPA evaluates the water quality standards set by states for the discharge of pollutants into their lakes and rivers. It can either accept those standards or propose its own. In Virginia's case, the EPA established its own criteria for various pollutants for Accotink Creek ("total maximum daily loads") and set a limit in 2011 on the total maximum amount of stormwater that could flow into the creek daily. But the court rejected the EPA's attempt to exert authority over stormwater runoff. It concluded that the EPA was trying to regulate something "over which it has no statutorily granted power ... as a proxy for something over which it is granted power." The EPA claimed it could regulate stormwater because the Clean Water Act did not specifically "forbid it" from regulating stormwater. In other words, the EPA was arguing that its authority was unlimited except where Congress had specifically limited it. As the court said, the "EPA would like to create the impression that Congress has given it loose rein to determine exactly what it could and could not regulate."

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Dover Council OKs including The Green in national park plan DOVER — The two patches of grass at the center of Delaware's participation in the American Revolution and the formation of the republic are on track to become part of the first national park within the state's borders, with action taken Monday night by City Council. Council voted unanimously to move forward with the preparation of a land easement for The Green, which would give the National Park Service authority to designate the historic spot as a national monument and have some sway over its long-term historic preservation. The city would not give up control of the land, nor would it be forced to change how The Green is used for public events, so long as existing standards of preservation are kept in place.

Nation already feeling backlash of unchecked climate change (Saturday) A new national report flatly declared Friday

that global climate change “is already affecting the American people” – making seasons hotter and drier, whipping up more furious storms and floods and threatening global ecosystems and every aspect of human activity. “Evidence for climate change abounds, from the top of the atmosphere to the depths of the oceans,” said the draft National Climate Assessment, which is issued every four years. In an opening to the 1,146-page document, described as “A letter to the American People,” the report’s lead officials said: “Climate change, once considered an issue for a distant future, has moved firmly into the present,” with evidence to be found in hotter seasons, increased wildfires, and retreating sea ice. “Americans are noticing changes all around them,” the report said. “Summers are longer and hotter, and periods of extreme heat last longer than any living American has ever experienced. Winters are generally shorter and warmer. Rain comes in heavier downpours, though in many regions there are longer dry spells in between.” Some areas initially could benefit from warmer temperatures or climate alterations, they conceded. “But many more have already proven to be detrimental, largely because society and its infrastructure were designed for the climate of the past, not for the rapidly changing climate of the present or the future.” Without large reductions in global emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gas – mainly pollutants from burning fossil fuel – effects will steadily worsen, with sea levels rising for centuries, heat waves and extreme weather worsening, the report said. Burdens could fall most heavily on those least able to manage, including “the elderly, children, the poor and the sick,” the report said. Those living along coastal areas will be subject to rising tides and storm surges. People living in already hot and dry regions will see their homes become hotter and drier. Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary Collin P. O’Mara said that the study found severe consequences for the Northeast in particular, if worldwide greenhouse gas emissions remain at high levels.

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

Project under way to protect IR bridge roadway Less than three months following damage from Hurricane Sandy, work has started to protect the Route 1 road bed on the north side approaches to the Indian River Inlet bridge. Delaware Department of Transportation Secretary Shailen Bhatt said Hurricane Sandy was a wakeup call to state officials. “No one expected the extreme damage to the transportation system,” he said. Six DelDOT resort transit buses are still being used in New Jersey because part of the commuter rail system was damaged when the storm hit the New Jersey coast. Bhatt said a crane is in place to begin the process of driving large, sheet-metal pilings into the sand along a 800- to 900-foot section of Route 1 to keep waves from undermining the road during a major storm such as Hurricane Sandy. The sheet metal will be driven about 40 feet into the sand to provide stop-gap protection for the roadway’s foundation. “The water is closer to the bridge than ever before. There will be storms and water and sand will wash over the road,” Bhatt said. “What we don’t want is the road bed to be undermined. This is our best attempt at a good solution.” Bhatt said under extreme conditions, the bridge abutments are designed to be partially submerged. The update was offered by Bhatt during a roundtable discussion Jan. 7 with media from around the state. In office less than two years, Bhatt has committed to quarterly meetings with the media. As Hurricane Sandy churned off the coast of Delaware the last weekend in October, waves and storm surge pushed tons of sand over Route 1, forcing DelDOT to close the road and Indian River Inlet bridge for a week.

Lopez vows to help Dewey with flooding Dewey Beach — Sen. Ernie Lopez, R-Lewes, speaks to Dewey Beach residents and officials at a Jan. 12 town council meeting. Lopez said he would help the town find ways to address bayside flooding. Of Senate District 6, which encompasses Dewey Beach, Rehoboth Beach, Lewes and Milton, Lopez said, “This is the economic powerhouse of the state right now.”

Rehoboth commissioners debate garden funding Rehoboth Beach — The Garden of the Navigators in Rehoboth Beach has one more hurdle to clear before construction can begin. The city commissioners are expected to vote Friday, Jan. 18, on a memorandum of understanding between the city and Rehoboth Beach Sister Cities Association, which is paying for the garden and donating it as a gift. The city will retain ownership of the garden, and will maintain the garden off Lake Gerar at Olive Avenue. However, an issue still at hand is the financing, and how much of it Sister Cities needs to have in place before starting. The Sister Cities Association is paying for the garden, designed by Ray Zebrowski of RPZ Designs, who will act as the project manager. The site plan, design, budget and construction schedules of the garden must be mutually agreed up by Sister Cities and Rehoboth. In Commissioner Patrick Gossett’s original draft of the memorandum, unveiled at the Jan. 7 commissioners’ workshop, construction of the garden could not begin until the project is fully funded. The official cost is not yet known, but rough estimates have put the cost around \$40,000

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Blog: Gov. Tomblin, coal, and getting things ‘off our backs’ In , Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin offered no real surprises on coal policy, with the possible exception of his promise that he would see to it that West Virginia’s coal production heads the opposite direction from what just about every industry forecast projects. Here’s the key line: I will continue to protect and increase the production of coal in West Virginia... The governor has taken this rhetorical route before, pointing to small blips in natural gas prices as what he believes is evidence of a coming coal rebound in Central Appalachia. Maybe he’s right. But we certainly haven’t seen industry experts agreeing with him, and it seems more likely that coal’s challenges in West Virginia will continue. And if today’s speech is any sort of preview, Gov. Tomblin doesn’t plan to try to lead the state toward any sort of a reasonable discussion about dealing with those challenges. That, of course, gets us to the other part of Gov. Tomblin’s coal soundbite, his pledge to continue to “protect” the coal industry — which he presumably was elaborating on when he said one of West Virginia’s biggest challenges is to get the federal government “off our backs”:

Blog: West Virginia First: Beyond cheerleading for coal? The inauguration and the start of a new term offer an opportunity to “Stay the Course” (the name taken by a Tomblin-supporting PAC that apparently thinks West Virginia’s low scores in so many quality-of-life measures are just fine) or to chart new directions. Gov. Tomblin has chosen as the theme for his inauguration, “West Virginia First,” a phrase he previously used in a speech when he was sworn in as acting governor in November 2010:

East End residents encouraged to compete for energy savings CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Two local organizations hope to pit East End residents against their neighbors, and blocks against blocks, in a friendly competition to conserve energy. Starting next month, residents from at least 25 East End blocks will compete to see who can save the most electricity and natural gas over the next year. Residents can find out more about what's called the E4 (Energy Efficiency in the East End) initiative Tuesday evening during a meeting of the East End Community Association. The group will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the Woman's Club of Charleston, 1600 Virginia St. E. The idea for the competition grew out of the Charleston Area Alliance's Vision 2030 20-year planning process, said Cullen Naumoff, a project manager with the Alliance. Energy is one of the seven Kanawha Valley economic drivers identified in that plan, Naumoff said. "We want to create a culture of conservation -- how do we use energy smarter?" While conservation sounds great, the challenge is to get homeowners to embrace the idea, she said. Other cities -- Boston in particular -- have held similar contests, Naumoff said. In 2009-10, about 100 households cut their energy bills by an average of 14 percent in Boston's Energy Smackdown. One household cut its costs by 73 percent. Working in the East End, where the Alliance has strong partnerships with the neighborhood association and East End Main Street, organizers last week recruited 25 block captains, Naumoff said. Captains will be in charge of recruiting residents in their blocks to join the competition and for maintaining enthusiasm. Each block has about 30 households, she said, which means the long 1500 blocks had to be divided.

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Replacing state senator becomes a complex proposition CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Harrison County politics is muddying the effort to replace former state Sen. Joe Minard, complicating Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's political life and leaving a top leadership post in the state House up in the air. Minard, D-Harrison, resigned his Senate seat last week to become Senate clerk. The position pays about \$95,000, which is more than three times what Minard made as a senator, according to 2011 payroll records. Minard, along with Sen. Doug Facemire, D-Braxton, represents a four-county district in North-Central West Virginia. The particulars of Harrison County politics make efforts to replace Minard interesting to watch. The county is traditionally divided between a Bridgeport faction and a Clarksburg faction; among Italians; and between Italians and non-Italians. There are also significant ramifications on the leadership of the House of Delegates because one of the candidates to go to the Senate is currently chairman of the powerful House Judiciary Committee.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. VA.)

Sandy relief package swells aid for past disasters WASHINGTON -- Conservatives and watchdog groups are mounting a "not-so-fast" campaign against a \$50.7 billion Superstorm Sandy aid package that Northeastern governors and lawmakers hope to push through the House this coming week...

W.Va. deer kills dip, fall turkey kills rise SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The number of deer killed during West Virginia's various seasons declined slightly last year. But the number of turkeys killed during the fall season increased. The Division of Natural Resources said Monday that hunters killed 131...

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Coal-ash pollution at three Maryland landfills to be cleaned up The operator of three coal-fired power plants in Maryland has agreed to pay a total of \$2.2 million in penalties and fix long-standing pollution problems at the landfills in Southern Maryland and Montgomery County where it disposes of the ash from those plants, according to court documents. In a proposed consent decree filed recently in U.S. District Court, subsidiaries of GenOn Energy, a Houston power company, agreed to settle lawsuits by Maryland and environmental groups alleging that the company's Brandywine, Faulkner and Westland coal-ash landfills have been polluting groundwater and nearby streams. GenOn, which merged last month with NRG Energy, based in Princeton, N.J., pledged to pay \$1.9 million and to investigate and clean up the contamination caused by its disposal facilities. The company also agreed recently to settle another lawsuit brought by the Maryland Department of the Environment accusing it of allowing ash from its Brandywine landfill in Prince George's County to wash into a tributary of the Patuxent River. In that consent decree filed in Prince George's Circuit Court, GenOn agreed to pay \$300,000 and to beef up runoff pollution controls at the site. A spokesman for NRG acknowledged the latter deal Friday without commenting on it. He did not respond to messages left over the weekend about the federal court settlement. Jay Apperson, spokesman for the Maryland Department of the Environment, did not comment, other than to point out the agreement covering all three landfills has yet to be approved by the federal court. Environmentalists who joined the state in the federal lawsuit hailed the settlement, though they said they wanted it to go further. "It's one of the toughest remediation requirements we've seen a state impose for a coal ash site," said Jennifer Peterson, a staff attorney with the Environmental Integrity Project, one of several activist groups to intervene in the federal lawsuit. The University of Maryland environmental law clinic helped represent the groups

\$8.6 million C&D Canal dredging project unclogs route for ship traffic At 14 miles long and 450 feet wide, the canal is a major artery for the port of Baltimore, carrying more than 40 percent of the port's shipping traffic: roll-on, roll-off cargo, cars, fuel and coal. ...The Army Corps of Engineers expects to lift navigational restrictions on the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal this week after emergency dredging removed shoaling that emerged in November.... Delaware Canal this week after emergency **dredging** removed shoaling that emerged in November ... two months, that's what they did, **dredging** nearly 750,000 cubic yards of muck ... First, the amount of federal money for **dredging** hasn't kept pace with costs. But equally ...

Fight brews on Maryland drink deposit law Benefits for recycling and litter debated. In a bid to boost recycling and reduce litter, a trio of lawmakers announced plans Monday to push for legislation that would levy a refundable nickel deposit on every beverage container sold in Maryland..

O'Malley readies new offshore wind bid (Sunday) Legislation likely to pass on third try, but impact uncertain. After being thwarted the past two years by skittish lawmakers, Gov. Martin O'Malley is preparing once again to introduce a bill aimed at planting mammoth wind turbines off Ocean City — and the measure may finally pass, thanks to a shake-up in a committee that stifled it last year..

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL GAZETTE

Letter: Bay report card Another great article, but the same old story ("State of the bay's health: D+" *Maryland Gazette*, Jan. 5). I guess Chesapeake Bay Foundation President Will Baker has to be optimistic in his position, but we seem to get one small victory without any long-term follow through. I have been in Maryland for 45 years and I can't see any

real improvement in the quality of the bays' water. I have written letters to the *Maryland Gazette* in the past and I don't know how people are eating the rockfish and crabs from the upper Chesapeake. Federal and state funding are only getting tighter and we have to stop throwing good money after bad. This is still a very huge problem and we have to crack down harder on the violators causing the pollution. I am pessimistic about the 2025 goal for a healthier bay and how many years will it be for the rockfish to stop returning to the upper Chesapeake to spawn. Please keep at them Staff Writer Pamela Wood; every little bit helps.

Chesapeake Conservancy adds member ANNAPOLIS — The nonprofit Chesapeake Conservancy has added lawyer Douglas P. Wheeler to its board. Wheeler, who lives in Washington, was a former top official at the U.S. Department of the Interior and California's secretary of natural resources. He also has held high-ranking positions with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Farmland Trust, the Sierra Club and the World Wildlife Fund. He currently practices environmental law in Washington and is counsel to the Chesapeake Conservancy. Wheeler was elected to the conservancy's board in December. The Chesapeake Conservancy advocates for land preservation and public access in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. For information, visit www.ChesapeakeConservancy.org.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (MD.)

Maryland seeking volunteers to teach children about the Chesapeake Bay, waterways, marine life ANNAPOLIS, Md. — The Maryland Department of Natural Resources says it is seeking volunteers to teach children about the Chesapeake Bay and other state waterways. The volunteers will be part of the Teaching Environmental Awareness in Maryland program. More than 1,200 classroom presentations have been given since the program was started in 1998. Students are told about the bay's six-state watershed, oysters, oyster reefs, horseshoe crabs and Chesapeake watermen. Volunteers are sought in all counties and teaching experience is not needed. Those interested are asked to attend three training workshops in February and March in Annapolis and Rockville.

Grant could further Potomac River dam removal CUMBERLAND, Md. -- A river restoration group has announced a \$40,000 federal grant toward the proposed removal of a Potomac River dam at Cumberland, Md. The Cumberland Times-News reported Sunday that Washington-based American Rivers received the grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The group says the money will help pay for testing of contaminants in the river bottom that could be released by demolition work. The group is working with local advocates for removing the 54-year-old structure and developing a whitewater paddling course. Opponents say removing the dam would ruin a two-mile stretch of relatively deep water used by motorboats. The dam is beneath a bridge between Cumberland and Ridgeley, W.Va. Cumberland Mayor Brian Grim says sediment testing would help city officials decide whether to support dam removal.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Commentary: Virginia can live without uranium mines The 2013 Virginia General Assembly session convened on Wednesday. During this "short session," we will amend the budget covering the current fiscal year and address thousands of bills covering a wide range of issues. These include the governor's proposals to fund Virginia's transportation needs and reform K-12 education as well as voting reform, expansion of Medicaid and gun safety. One hotly contested issue is whether to lift the 30-year moratorium on uranium mining and milling in Virginia. In the late 1970s, a significant amount of uranium deposits were discovered at the Coles Hill farm in Pittsylvania County. A Canadian company made plans to mine the deposit, and secured leases on many other potential deposits throughout the Piedmont.

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT

Report: Virginia must lead in fighting sea level rise Virginia needs to get serious about rising sea levels and frequent flooding and take the lead in combatting the problems that threaten the allure of living and doing business on the coast, according to a report distributed this week to state lawmakers. The report is hardly the first time that scientists have laid out the enormous stakes of sea level rise - especially in low-lying regions such as Hampton Roads and the Eastern

Shore, which flood almost every time it rains. But the 135-page document is the first official statement on the politically charged problem as requested by the General Assembly and outlined by state scientific advisers at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. "It's a significant first step," said state Del. Lynwood Lewis, a Democrat who represents the Eastern Shore and a section of Norfolk. "It gets us moving. And, to me, the best news is that it shows we can do something about this." Lewis and others said the next logical step would be to study potential strategies for coping with rising waters and sinking lands, a one-two punch that makes Hampton Roads the second-most-vulnerable area to floods and storm surge in the nation behind New Orleans. The report says those strategies are proving effective in other parts of the world, such as Asia and Europe, though they often are expensive, controversial and time consuming. They include constructing sea walls and berms, passing zoning laws to discourage development in flood-prone areas, physically raising streets and infrastructure, and installing giant pumps and other stormwater-control devices. However, it does not appear that such a study will be approved this year by legislators. Politics and money are to blame, according to several legislators, aides and observers. While the study released this week cost only about \$50,000, it delves into the sticky world of climate change and global warming. State Sen. Ralph Northam, a Democrat who represents Norfolk and the Eastern Shore, and who was a co-patron of the study request last year, said he has no plans to introduce legislation on sea level rise this year. Neither does state Del. Chris Stolle, R-Virginia Beach, who also was a co-patron of the study last year. Still, cities such as Norfolk are keen to keep studying, measuring and planning coping strategies. Officials hope to keep the political noise down and seek funding for studies through regional planning organizations, not the General Assembly, according to several officials. _

NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS

Environmental groups sue over coal-fired Yorktown plant Environmental groups filed suit Monday in Circuit Court in Richmond to block a discharge permit renewal for the aging coal-fired Yorktown Power Station, claiming the state failed in its duty under the Clean Water Act to first evaluate its environmental impact. Discharge permits must be renewed every five years, and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) did so for the Yorktown plant last November. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had advised DEQ to set pollution limits first. But, according to the Charlottesville-based Southern Environmental Law Center and the Sierra Club, which filed the suit, the state failed to evaluate the impact of arsenic and other metals discharged into the nearby York River, set pollution limits for coal waste streams and establish ongoing pollution monitoring. The power station was built in the 1950s along the river and is owned and operated by Dominion Virginia Power. In 2011, Dominion announced plans to end operations at its Yorktown coal units by 2015, citing economic and environmental concerns. It reiterated that intention in its annual integrated resource plan, which was filed with the state last August and is still posted on its website. But environmental groups are concerned Dominion has not made a binding commitment to do so.

ROANOKE TIMES

Federal agency launches investigation of possible drinking water contamination around Radford arsenal A federal public health agency is investigating possible contamination of drinking water that flows from the Radford arsenal, which sits atop buried hazardous waste. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry will hold an open house Jan. 24 at Belview Elementary School to hear from concerned community members. The agency's mission, it said this week, is "to evaluate whether the community near the Radford Army Ammunition Plant was exposed to harmful chemicals." For years, some residents have worried that traces of hazardous waste -- the leftovers of making ammunition that were dumped on the plant's sprawling grounds decades ago, before current environmental regulations took effect -- may have found their way into the wells of nearby homes.

Tests by the Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Environmental Quality have found little evidence to support those concerns.

But at the request of a local environmental organization, the Agency for Toxic Substances agreed to embark on what may be a more detailed examination.

"If there are big red flags, hopefully they will be the ones that will do something," said Maria Bowling of the New River Sierra Club, one of the groups that pushed for the investigation. "That's their job, and they know how to deal with data." The Agency for Toxic Substances, an arm of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said it will be at least a year before it completes its evaluation.

DANVILLE REGISTER AND BEE

Final part of uranium report due Tuesday The full socioeconomic report from the Uranium Working Group is headed to Gov. Bob McDonnell's office Tuesday. In a letter to Delegate Terry Kilgore, chair of the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission, the governor said he had received an interim report on the socioeconomic study, and saw uncertainties. Kilgore shared the letter's contents with the commission last week. "I can say at this point that results seem to be mixed about whether or not this should go forward," O'Donnell wrote. He added: "I feel like I should wait for this final report before making a final decision on this issue." Virginia Uranium wants to mine a 119-million-pound uranium ore deposit in Pittsylvania County, approximately six miles from Chatham. The company has been lobbying the legislature to write regulations for uranium mining and milling, which would effectively lift a 1982 moratorium on the industry.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (VA.)

New Va. uranium mining study set for release RICHMOND — The drafting of proposed uranium mining legislation is expected to be completed this week in Richmond as yet another study on the subject makes its debut. Sen. John Watkins has proposed legislation that could open the door to the mining of a 119-million-pound deposit in Pittsylvania County. The legislation is needed to end a decades-long moratorium on the mining of the radioactive ore. Meantime, Gov. Bob McDonnell's Uranium Working Group expects to issue its final study, this one on the socioeconomic impact of allowing uranium mining. Virginia Uranium Inc. has proposed mining the Southside deposit of the ore. Environmentalists and groups that include the NAACP and the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation want the 1982 ban to remain in place. The issue is expected to be fiercely debated in the General Assembly.

Trees mistakenly cleared from Redskins camp site RICHMOND -- Richmond officials want to know why dozens of mature trees were mistakenly cleared from the Washington Redskins summer training camp site. Mayor Dwight Jones tells media outlets that the city had committed to protecting older hardwoods at the west end of the property. He says city officials are reviewing the incident. The camp is being built on state-owned property behind the Science Museum of Virginia. Grading and excavation began last week. City Councilman Chris Hilbert says the loss of the trees is shocking. He says he's outraged and he wants a full report on how it happened. Jones says the trees will be replaced.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

EPA Finds 28 States Have Not Submitted Ozone Implementation Plans Twenty-eight states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have not submitted complete "infrastructure" state implementation plans for the 2008 ozone air quality standards, the Environmental Protection Agency said in a final rule to be published Jan. 15. Issuing "findings of failure to submit" starts a two-year deadline for the agency to issue federal implementation plans unless the states issue their own plans in the meantime. EPA described infrastructure SIPs as those that provide the basic Clean Air Act program elements necessary to implement the eight-hour ozone standard. EPA set the ozone NAAQS at 75 parts per billion, averaged over eight hours, in 2008 during the George W. Bush administration. When President Obama took office, the agency announced it would reconsider the standards. State implementation plans were due March 12, 2011, which fell during the reconsideration process. However, EPA in September 2011 announced it would drop the reconsideration (172 DEN A-8, 9/6/11). The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California on Oct. 17, 2012, ordered EPA to sign findings of failure to submit by Jan. 4 (WildEarth Guardians v. Jackson, N.D. Cal., No. 11-5651, order issued 12/7/12). "The EPA recognizes that its efforts to reconsider the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS delayed and complicated the efforts of some states to develop and submit these infrastructure SIPs, but at this time the EPA is nevertheless required by court order to make these findings," EPA wrote in the final rule.

Sierra Club Calls for Renewed Commitment by Obama on Climate The Sierra Club calls on President Obama to step up his commitment to addressing climate change in his second term by using his existing authority to set greenhouse gas limits for new and existing power plants and expand recently strengthened vehicle efficiency requirements to include medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. The initiative, which the environmental group calls the Obama Climate and

Clean Energy Legacy campaign, calls on the administration to move quickly during the president's second term to cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

GenOn Agrees to Pay \$1.9 Million for Cleanup of Maryland Coal Ash Sites

GenOn Energy Inc. agrees to pay a civil penalty of \$1.9 million and perform remedial actions to prevent future surface water and groundwater contamination from three Maryland coal ash ponds under a proposed consent decree. Under the agreement filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, GenOn MD Ash Management would cap and seal all closed cells in the landfills and install liner systems in all leachate and stormwater collection ponds.

FORBES

Commentary: EPA: Green Gone Wild The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) wants to vastly expand its power. Last year, the agency paid nearly \$700,000 to the National Academy of Sciences to draft the document "Sustainability and the U.S. EPA." This manifesto rationalizes why the EPA has the right to regulate every business, community and ecosystem in the country. The key to the EPA's regulatory control is "sustainability," an illusive and ill-defined term even more broadly applicable than the interstate commerce clause. According to the EPA's website, "Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations." What can the EPA therefore regulate? Everything. Because everything depends on our natural environment. Can you use that? Not if we decide some other use is more important. What if my claim is most important? The EPA can decide that future generations have an even more critical claim. Are humans important? Yes, but no more important than nature, and it is our purview to speak for nature and adjudicate dispute so that both can exist in productive harmony. One of my undergraduate degrees at Stanford was in philosophy. There I enjoyed studying not only logic, but also logical fallacies. The EPA's regulatory reach is based on several fallacious assumptions.

Promised Land's Fracking Fictions: OPEC Goes Hollywood With Crocudrama It seems like nothing sells better in Hollywood than a scary story about beleaguered residents of a rural community battling villainous, greedy energy capitalists bent upon ravaging their environment in reckless disregard for public safety. If this tried-and-true scripting stereotype holds, Matt Damon's new film "Promised Land" should be a blockbuster. Never mind that the whole theme was based upon unsubstantiated claims, or that the movie was financed in part by a company that is wholly-owned by the government of the United Arab Emirates, an OPEC member that has lots of oily skin in the game. Who's to tell the audience about such trifling details? Well actually, some word has gotten out after all...enough information, at least, to provoke the producers to make a hasty last-ditch script revision after production had already begun. The original inspiration for the film apparently came from a bogus claim that hydraulic oil and gas fracturing operations (or "fracking") in Dimock, Pennsylvania had contaminated water wells of 11 families.

CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER

Editorial: EPA must get fracking test right: editorial Proponents of hydraulic fracturing say that as long as wells are drilled and encased properly at the wellhead, there is no danger of groundwater contamination. Yet as such drilling proliferates in Ohio and elsewhere, citizens understandably worry about contaminants getting into wells or the heavy freshwater needs of "frackers" depleting local groundwater resources. The process generally involves injecting copious amounts of chemical-laden water to fracture deeply buried shale and then disposing of the millions of gallons of tainted wastewater in deep-injection wells. Frackers aren't usually required to reveal the exact formulations of their chemicals in advance or to pre-test wells at a distance from the wellhead, inducing some communities to consider paying for expensive benchmark testing of groundwater themselves. One problem in resolving these concerns has been the dearth of credible, national studies. Fortunately, at congressional direction, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the early stages of a major, peer-reviewed investigation of fracking's possible impact on drinking water resources. The EPA aims to release a draft report by the end of 2014. The study is getting generally favorable marks from industry and environmental groups, but The Associated Press reported last week that EPA was limiting the scope of its study because it "hasn't found a drilling company to partner with to test groundwater around a drilling site," forcing it to rely on computer simulations that "won't be able to address the likelihood of contamination" during actual field operations.

DETROIT FREE PRESS

Minimum sound standards proposed for hybrid, electric vehicles WASHINGTON -- Federal regulators say it may be time for hybrid and electric vehicles to pump up the volume. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is proposing minimum sound standards for hybrid and electric vehicles as a way to make pedestrians more aware of them as they approach. Because those vehicles don't rely on traditional gas or diesel-powered engines at low speeds, they tend to be much quieter, making them hard to hear amid ambient street noise. The proposed standard -- mandated in the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act -- would require that the vehicles are audible among a wide range of street noises whenever traveling under 18 miles per hour. At 18 miles per hour and faster, the NHTSA said last week, vehicles make enough noise that pedestrians and bicyclists can hear them without added sound.